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Book Reviews --Monographic Musings

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Facts on File has published the second edition of *Shakespeare's Language: A Glossary of Unfamiliar Words in His Plays and Poems* by **Eugene F. Shewmaker** (2008, 978-0816071258, \$67.50). The new edition is an update of a title first published 12 years ago and includes coverage of three plays recently accepted into the **Shakespeare** canon: the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *King Edward III* and *Sir Thomas More*.

Using a variety of sources, author **Eugene F. Shewmaker** has assembled some 17,000 definitions, including 2,000 that are new to this edition. Besides the definitions, each entry has the part of speech, the word used in content within specific works identified by act, scene and line, as well as variant usages of the word when applicable.

Students and scholars will appreciate the painstaking research that has gone into this volume. Using sources like the *Oxford English Dictionary*, **Alexander Schmidt's Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary, and **R.D. Eagleston's** revision of **C.T. Onions'** classic *A Shakespeare Glossary*, this reference offers readers a valuable tool for gaining a fuller appreciation of **Shakespeare's** works. The introduction cites numerous examples that point to the richness of **Shakespeare** words and wordplay, while at the same time, providing an awareness of the challenges they present in gaining a full understanding of **Shakespeare's** poems and plays. Author **Shewmaker** also provides a list of essential sources for **Shakespearean** studies in both his section of acknowledgements and in the brief, but selective, bibliography ending the book.**

All in all, *Shakespeare's Language: A Glossary of Unfamiliar Words in His Plays and Poems* is a handy, easy to use and affordable resource that will find a place in both reference and circulating collections of both public and academic libraries. It should also find a welcomed home on the personal shelves of many interested students, scholars and lay readers.

Both the serious scholar and the dedicated history buff will be gratified to see the care and effort that has gone into **Bud Hannings' Chronology of the American Revolution** (2008, 9780786429486, \$125).

Published by **McFarland**, this book is far more than a listing of dates with short notes about related occurrences. It functions as a day to day account of military and political actions based on primary sources and historic records, particularly from the *Journals of the Continental Congress* and the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*. In some ways the book acts as a broad index to both of these sources by providing the dates of particular events so researchers can check the *Journals* and the *Diplomatic Correspondence* for the complete accounts.

However, this book is far more than an index to primary sources. **Hannings'** work stands on its own as a reference by giving detailed descriptions of the events along with the actions of the major players. Naturally, the arrangement is by date with each entry subdivided by the city or state where the actions occurred. Whenever necessary, there is a section relating naval activities as well as the land engagements. As one reads through these entries the intimate involvement of **Congress** in day to day military affairs is apparent. The constant barrage of letters and correspondence both to and from **Congress** regarding both important and commonplace issues is revealing. However, the reader is also kept fully informed regarding the actions of the individual officers and relevant military units. The entries are all written in the present tense in an attempt to "bring the reader closer to the action" and illustrations are drawn from the **National Ar-**

chives as well as other public domain sources like **Benson J. Lossing's Pictorial field Book of the Revolution** published in 1860. Aside from the chronological arrangement there is an alphabetical index that helps readers find specific information. More use of subcategories would have been helpful in this regard. When looking for evidence of **Lafayette's** various military contributions being faced with a string of page numbers six lines long can be daunting.

Nonetheless, the *Chronology of the American Revolution* is meticulously researched and provides a wealth of information. **Mr. Hannings** displays a commitment to primary records that along with his devotion to detail, makes his work a valuable resource for any serious student of the American Revolution and its military history. Both academic and public libraries where there is interest in American history will want it in their collections. 🐾

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston)
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Column Editor's Note: When I think of this month's reviewers I am reminded of a song that my grandmother and mother used to sing to me: "Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold." Not only are these pages graced with the thoughts of veteran **ATG** reviewer **Phillip Powell**, they are also filled with the insightful views of **ATG** newcomer **Todd Rix**.

While readers have read numerous reviews by **Powell**, they might be surprised to learn that he is also the ultimate cinephile of the golden age of Hollywood. Ask him any question about **Hitchcock**, **Bogart**, or **Hepburn** (**Katherine** or **Audrey**), and you simply cannot stump him. With his knack for remembering the minute details of a variety of film genres and his talent for connecting each actor and director to their contemporaries in the business, **British Film Noir Guide** is right up his alley.

Rix, the Instruction and Electronic Resources Librarian at **Coker College** in Hartsville, South Carolina, received his MLIS from the **University of South Carolina** in 2006. Not only does he teach **Coker** students the art of library research, he is also involved with **Coker's Integrated Library System**. Good library Web design takes a blend of technological dexterity, technical writing ability, and instruction skills. With the many hats he wears at **Coker**, we are lucky that one of them is **ATG** reviewer — his library expertise makes him the perfect reviewer of **Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries**. Happy reading, everyone! — **DV**

Keaney, Michael F. British Film Noir Guide. Jefferson, NC:
McFarland, 2008. 9780786438051. 269 pages. \$55.00.

Reviewed by **Phillip Powell** (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston)
<powellp@cofc.edu>

Everyone eventually finds their niche in life and it appears **Michael Keaney's** is cataloging, viewing, and reviewing films within the genre of film noir. He previously wrote the monumental *Film Noir Guide* (**McFarland**, 2003). Although this book is not readily available, it is assumed *British Film Noir Guide* is similar in format.

In the Preface, **Keaney** makes a gallant effort describing what film noir is and is not. Most straightforwardly, he defines noir as a "dark, visual style" which emphasizes

troubling plots, dreary settings, and unsettling characters. "Dragnet" and "Perry Mason" from early television both have noir qualities about them. He also spends several paragraphs telling how there are always exceptions. These are often dependent whether the film is American or European. **Keaney** states defining noir is often in "the eye of the beholder." It seems the plots were often centered on crime, the police, and often, a femme fatale. Yet, keeping close to the strictest sense of the film noir definition,

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Keaney has included versions of *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Oliver Twist*. Films based on novels by **Dickens** are not necessarily the first coming to mind when considering film noir.

The listings begin in 1937 and proceed until 1964. Most of them are films unfamiliar to even seasoned viewers. Yet, many of the actors' names — mostly British, but also American — are familiar to anyone with a basic knowledge of classic films. **Vivien Leigh, Laurence Olivier, Deborah Kerr, James Mason**, and even, **Joan Collins** have earned their way into film noir fame. This can be continued by Americans including **Jane Wyman, Joseph Cotton, Ginger Rodgers**, and **Richard Widmark**.

Keaney's entries are invariably entertaining. Each includes a critical synopsis. Sometimes, a synopsis seems convoluted, but there is the possibility it is only accurately reflecting the plot itself. Some of these stories do not make a lot of sense. Even **Keaney** occasionally questions a film's believability. Except for

the films not actually seen, each film is given a one to five star rating. Anything like this is subjective, but the author has indicated to the reader his idea of the qualities of film noir in the Preface.

Besides the standard production and cast information, **Keaney** gives the reader something special. With each full synopsis, he has taken a quote from the movie being discussed. It is not certain how the author has selected these quotes, but they are wonderful. The camp, over-the-top quality associated with low-budget films is very evident. Three examples randomly chosen include:

You string along with me, baby, and you'll be dripping in diamonds. We're going places. [*Dual Alibi*, 1947]

The criminal mind. It's the dark side of the moon. [*The Frightened City*, 1961]

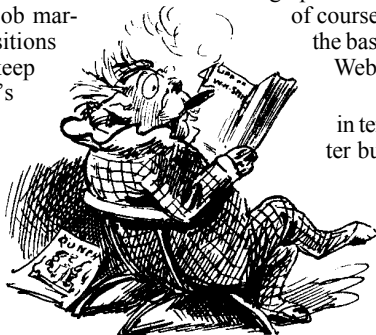
No money is safe where a woman can get her hands on it. [*The Good Die Young*, 1954]

Any good film reference collection should include this volume as well as its predecessor mentioned above.

Rubenstein, Charles P. *Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 9781591583660. 220 pages. \$30.00.

Reviewed by **Todd Rix** (Instruction and Electronic Resources Librarian, Coker College) <trix@coker.edu>

Can you imagine a library today without a Web portal? Similarly, could you imagine a MLIS/MLS program today without Web development coursework? As a recent MLIS graduate and successful survivor of the job search market, Web development skills are a requirement in today's job market. School library media positions require Web design skills to keep up with classroom teacher's Websites; archivists are frequently creating Web portals to showcase digitized collections, and we beleaguered academic librarians are creating extensively detailed library Web pages that need to be updated frequently. For those librarians that need a



refresher course in HTML or are new to Web design altogether, *Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries* by **Charles P. Rubenstein** provides a basic Web design foundation. Will you be building dynamic Websites with Flash graphics after reading this book? No, of course not — but you will have the basic tools needed to create a Website for your library.

Crash Course is laid out in ten chapters, and each chapter builds on the skills learned in the previous chapter. There are ample drawings, photographs and diagrams throughout the book — especially helpful in the more difficult topics in the

last few chapters. **Dr. Rubenstein** created a fake library Website (it is a *real* Website for a *fake* library) to use for examples throughout the book, and he recommends taking the code from this Website and customizing it for one's own library Website. Code "pinching" and tweaking is a common and acceptable practice, as long as one credits the original coder in the comments field of the HTML code.

Rubenstein begins the book by introducing HTML concepts, including some of the tools needed to properly code a Webpage. He recommends using **Microsoft Word** to code HTML, which I disagree with wholeheartedly. **MS Word** adds a lot of extraneous HTML code that does not "play nice" with every Internet browser, even **Microsoft's** own browser, **Internet Explorer**. This extra code requires an additional cleanup step before launching the Website. **Rubenstein** does mention **Word's** HTML shortcomings later in the same chapter, but why bother to use something that requires an extra cleanup step? I would rather use **Notepad** or **Word-Pad**, both of which are included with recent **Microsoft** operating systems.

Rubenstein does an excellent job explaining HTML and Web coding at the right level for working librarians, providing just enough detail and jargon to explain the concepts without overwhelming the reader. Obviously, the reader builds upon the knowledge gained in each chapter: text formatting leads to images and email links, and eventually cascading style sheets, tables and dynamic Web pages are explained. Another strong point of the book is the teaching of consistent file-naming conventions and organization. By keeping file names similar throughout a Website, it makes it easier to update and improve the Website in the future. Keeping the HTML file folders organized properly is an often overlooked feature of Web tutorials. Once again, consistent organization makes it easier to update the Website at a later time.

Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries is an excellent resource for those librarians who are new to HTML and Website development as well as those of us who need a brief refresher course. Is it a stand-alone resource? Probably not, but it certainly is solid enough to be the foundation of a great Website development book collection. 🐼

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Library and her lovely daughter **Denada** is married and doing very well. **Farfuri's** son is in medical school in Albania. I am hoping that we will be able to reconnect one day. What a thrill that would be!

I remember when my son was in high school and he had to write a paper for his computer class. He chose **Charles Babbage**, someone I had never heard of and he needed to know something about this gentleman quickly (for obvious reasons! he had a paper due, uh, quickly!).

Anyway, I perked my ears up when I heard that the **ACM (the Association for Computing Machinery)** had chosen the **Charles Babbage Institute (CBI)** as the repository for its extensive collection of internal **ACM** records, conference proceedings, research-based journals, magazines, and the personal papers and edited interviews of legendary figures that span the history of computing. These historical records, from the beginnings of the field in the late 1940s, capture the activities of **ACM's** many **Special Interest Groups** that focus on specific areas of computing. They also track the growth of hundreds of **ACM** professional and student chapters, which have attracted computing professionals, practitioners,

and researchers around the world. **CBI** will house the collection at its Center for the History of Information Technology at the **University of Minnesota** in Minneapolis. The **ACM** collection at **CBI** includes the services of a professional archivist to work in residence as well as a dedicated student support staff. It will offer an online search function with access to detailed historical and content information.

www.cbi.umn.edu/index.html
history.acm.org

Just got this email from the fabulously effective **Doina Farkas** <DFarkas@fcsf.edu>!

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